

Memorial down at the other end of the National Mall. We understand that FREEDOM IS NOT FREE.

For more than two centuries, Americans have sacrificed in war for their families, for their communities, and for their nation. Many thousands have died. But of those who did not die, few have gone through what our friend and colleague SAM JOHNSON went through in Vietnam. For many long years he suffered torture, imprisonment, and solitary confinement. They worked on him relentlessly to break his spirit. But the spirit of SAM JOHNSON could not be broken. He stood up to his captors with dignity and with grace. He refused to betray his country. And he refused to give up on his God.

I believe SAM would tell you, if you asked, that it was the Lord in heaven who saw him through those dark days in the Hanoi Hilton. But his reliance on our Creator does not make him less of a hero or less of a man. It makes him one of the greatest living heroes in the United States of America. And it makes him an example to us all.

The Sam Johnsons of this world are few and far between. But somehow, this country seems to find one when one is needed.

Another hero worthy of being recognized is Captain Edward Davis from the U.S. Navy, retired. Captain Davis, a constituent of mine, also served our country during the Vietnam War and was a Prisoner of War from 1965 to 1972.

Captain Davis served in VA-152. His decorations include three Silver Star medals, the Legion of Merit with Combat Citation, four Bronze Stars with valor device, five Air Medals, two Purple Hearts and three Navy Commendation medals. He retired from the Navy in 1987.

His service to America should be remembered. I am honored to have him reside in my congressional district.

I pray that next time around, whether it's in Iraq or somewhere else, the enemies of freedom will once again find themselves looking in the face of someone like SAM JOHNSON or Ed Davis, someone who is living proof that what this country stands for is right, and just, and good.

IN HONOR OF DANIEL HUMBERTO JARA, RECIPIENT OF THE HISPANIC AMERICAN GOOD SCOUT AWARD

### HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2003*

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Daniel Humberto Jara, who was honored on February 7th at the Hispanic American Good Scout Award Dinner at the Robert Treat Hotel in Newark, New Jersey.

The president and founder of the Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, Mr. Jara oversees a network of business partnerships that represent over forty thousand businesses throughout New Jersey and Philadelphia. He has attained national acclaim for his leadership and role in the Hispanic business community, and Hispanic Business Magazine listed him as one of the 100 most influential Hispanics in the nation. The State-

wide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey was rated first out of the top 50 chambers by Business New Jersey in 1998 and 1999.

In 1992, Mr. Jara was appointed to chair the National Hispanic Legislative Forum and in 1993 he chaired the National Convention of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. He was elected to serve as vice chairman of the Board of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Prior to founding the Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, Mr. Jara was president of the Greater Paterson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce for two consecutive terms, served on Governor Whitman's Advisory Council on Minority Business Development, and the Governors Study Commission on Discrimination in State Employment and Contracting.

Mr. Jara has received the Hispanic Achievement Award from Hispanic Magazine and the Lifetime Achievement Award by the New Jersey Policy Research Organization. He has also been an active advocate for the disabled community and has been recognized by the Association of Hispanic Handicapped of New Jersey for his exemplary contributions.

Mr. Jara obtained his bachelor's degree in Economics and master's degree in Finance and Business Administration from Rutgers University, where he was president of the Rutgers Newark Program Board and the head of a number of Hispanic student organizations. He is an honorary member of the Rutgers Leadership Recognition Society.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Daniel Humberto Jara for his leadership in the Hispanic business community and his contributions to the state of New Jersey.

### INTRODUCTION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACCREDITING AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2003

### HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2003*

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation, the Higher Education Accrediting Agency Responsibility Act of 2003, that will remove the requirement that institutions of higher education be accredited in order to be eligible for federal funds. The system of accreditation of colleges and universities that has developed in the United States does not serve its avowed purpose of ensuring that institutions of higher education have good academic programs and standards, and it fails to provide hardly any benefit at all to our higher education system. Additionally, more effective and less costly mechanisms are already in place to protect students. For example, no institution can receive federal funds until the Department of Education certifies its financial and administrative capacity, and institutions also must meet various state licensing and oversight requirements related to quality.

Accreditation these days has little to do with academic rigor or educational outcomes; rather, it serves only to show that a school has the right set of inputs, and virtually every college and university in the nation is able to comply with these standards. Because federal

law makes eligibility to receive federal student loan funds conditional upon retaining accredited status from an accrediting association recognized by the Department of Education, schools have a rather large incentive to maintain their accreditation status. This places an enormous amount of influence in the hands of the accrediting agencies, which oftentimes force schools to reallocate resources or even adopt policies at odds with a school's individual mission in order to comply with accreditation requirements and recommendations.

As we continue to pursue policies of accountability for our education institutions and strive to do our part in making higher education affordable for more Americans, we must examine ways that the accreditation process can be changed to play a more useful role—one that provides meaningful information about a school to students and parents. I believe the Higher Education Accrediting Agency Responsibility Act of 2003 is the necessary first step to achieve this goal.

### A TRIBUTE TO ST. LOUIS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

### HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2003*

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to St. Louis Children's Hospital. I am extremely honored to commend them for their dedication and commitment to the well-being of precious children in need of medical attention. They were recently ranked 6th in the nation among the top 10 Best Children's Hospitals in America by Child Magazine. The hospital's devotion to ensuring that children are receiving high quality and appropriate medical, nursing and mental health care, earned them the privilege of a five-star customer service award for patient satisfaction. They placed fourth for their excellent neonatology/neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

St. Louis Children's Hospital is highly devoted to improving the health of children and providing the highest quality care. This hospital has the country's largest full-service pediatric cerebral palsy program and the world's largest pediatric lung transplant program in the world. The doctors at St. Louis Children's Hospital performed 70 pediatric transplants in 2001, more than any other hospital surveyed.

St. Louis Children's Hospital diligently researches to generate scientific information that provides insight to the cause, treatment and prevention of childhood disease. In addition, such studies provide essential knowledge for improving the general health of all children. The hospital has conducted more than 500 peer-reviewed clinical trials, including the largest and longest childhood asthma study.

Mr. Speaker, St. Louis Children's Hospital has provided specialized care for children for over 120 years. Their health care professionals are both skilled and compassionate with all patients and their families. They are well-deserved of our honor and I urge my colleagues to join me in commending them for the commitment and remarkable care they provide to the children of the greater St. Louis region.